

SAULT AREA  
HOSPITAL

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORTS

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Exceptional people working together to provide outstanding care in Algoma.

# 2021

## Chief of Staff Report: Dr. Silvana Spadafora

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I am at now at the completion of my fourth year as Chief of Staff at Sault Area Hospital. Medical Advisory Committee with our Chiefs completed the work required of them for this past cycle of 2020-21.

Since my last report, we have successfully partnered with Dr. James Chan and Rhonda Hurley to assist with our MAC work on many fronts. MAC Chiefs have completed our refresh of our Medical Manpower Resource Plan which was tabled to the Board in 2016 and reflected our needs projected to 2021. With Dr. James Chan, MAC will work to bring our updated medical manpower plan to better recruit and retain our medical professional staff. Our ongoing work requires engagement of the programs and services to align our recruitment to our hospital and community needs, recognizing our unique patient and provider demographics. MAC, through our recruitment work, partners with our Mayor and CAO, our hospital and community stakeholders such as the Group Health Centre as we pursue new recruits and we explore new service models for care delivery with our new physicians.

At MAC we have many sub committees which undertake important work and report to us. Tied to the activity of recruitment is the work of our Credentialing Committee. This year, we have again credentialed over 300 physicians to work with our hospital. This process is year round. We can report over 130 active and active reciprocal physicians for our hospital. We have over 100 locum/term physicians appointed over the past year, and I wish to commend these physicians, as they assisted in meeting our duty to serve our community by attending at our hospital during the challenges set forth by COVID without reliable air service etc. Our credentials work cannot be set aside, even in the time of pandemic and I want to thank Lydia Foster, our trusted coordinator and Dr. Stephen Smith who has stepped forward as chair of this Committee.

Our Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee, successfully chaired for many years

by Dr. James Curran has continued to undertake their important work over the past year. This work ensures appropriate medication usage and postings which at times during COVID access issues for resources was not easy.

Our Infection Control Committee continued as an important committee which helped with our SAH pandemic response. Dr. Lucas Castellani and Lee Marcoux co-chaired this committee and worked to ensure our policies and procedures were continuously updated and reviewed to ensure our patients' and workers' safety, while they continued with their day to day work during the pandemic but just as important, as we moved into our usual work which now must continue under the spectra of COVID.

Our partnership with University Health Network for our Transfusion Committee is led by our new chair Dr. Laura Stone. She and her group work with our UHN and provincial partners to ensure SAH input into various policies such as the Provincial Massive Hemorrhage protocol and peri-procedural policies while ensuring again, good quality care closer to home for our patients.

Our Health Records Committee is chaired by Dr. Derek Garniss and Tammy Ryan and they assisted in our transition from paper to electronic EMR by updating our policies and procedures as we have moved forward with this initiative. We will continue to heavily rely upon this group as we continue to work at keeping our technology in step with our patient care needs and ensuring a seamless and comprehensive patient record while allowing us to standardize our care at the bedside across providers and departments.

Despite the obvious limitations set upon us by COVID, our professional staff wellness committee, chaired by Dr. Christa Cassalman, President of our Medical Staff Association, assisted with Dr. Paisley Trusdale, and others have continued to reach out and assist our professional staff in keeping morale up and keeping an eye on helping us overcome burn out or at least minimize its impact on ourselves and on our work. We continue as one of the first hospitals in Canada that has been able to accomplish this partnership with our medical staff association, our

hospital and our MAC and I believe that this model will continue to help our professional staff group in maintaining wellness. This work reflects MAC's commitment to partner with SAH and medical staff association as we prioritize the wellness for all of our staff as they work to deliver safe quality care as close to home as is safely possible.

Medical Professional Leadership Development is a personal area of interest for me and we see our physicians and professional staff practicing their learnings, especially in the times of stressful challenges. MAC has been pleased to partner with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario in prioritizing the physician leadership group proposed and bringing it closer to home. I am happy to report that we have at least 5 physicians who will be working on bringing their quality improvement projects to various areas of our hospital and will be looking at their professional staff partners to bring this work to fruition. I wish to thank Dr. Andy Webb and his group for their support. Much work remains to be done and our upcoming cycle for MAC will be exciting as well as challenging as we proceed through our next cycle. We have seasoned Chiefs to our next MAC to continue our work at MAC for our new cycle.

We will continue the challenge to return to our pre COVID work as we better understand and incorporate our understandings of managing COVID and how it will change the way we deliver our care.

Last but never least, I wish to acknowledge Alison Pook for her ongoing support of MAC and our work: she manages to keep us on time and on topic and she manages to relieve the stress of our work and personally makes my work pleasant and relatively stress free.

I thank you for the privilege of working with my colleagues at MAC to ensure we continue to bring quality care to our patients' bedside, offering the right services at the right time for the right patient by the right provider. COVID will shape our society for years to come, and will start within our health care system and I am happy to report our successful outcome to this pandemic challenge.

## Chief Executive Officer: Wendy Hansson

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Good afternoon members, colleagues and honored guests. It is my pleasure to welcome you to our Sault Area Hospital Annual General Meeting and provide you with my 2020-21 CEO Report. It is important to reflect on the progress we have made and the outstanding work that we have done- in an unprecedented year in our country's history.

Today, we currently have 4 active cases of COVID-19 in our community; with Algoma District having recorded 396 cases since the start of the pandemic. While each and every person experiencing COVID-19 is of critical importance, our low case volume as a community has been a testament to the outstanding work of our health care professionals, our partners and our citizens. So, before I speak about where we are today, let's go back 16 months.

What would you do if you were suddenly faced with a challenge that is unknown, uncharted territory, and know that how you respond will have a significant impact on the health and safety of all those you serve?

On January 25 2020, the first presumptive case of COVID- 19 was identified in Canada. Initially, national officials identified the risk of an outbreak as being low and little was known about the novel coronavirus.

SAH held its first meeting to discuss the virus in February 2020. Little did we know what lay ahead. What I can tell you though, is that great teams, great organizations and great communities' band together during times of crisis. That is exactly what your SAH team, our community and our region has done.

In March 2020, we deployed a Command Centre – imagine a Flight Mission Control – whereby a group of leaders, experts, specialists and ground team, came together to gather data, respond to incoming information and make decisions on how best to proceed to direct the flight. That is in essence what our team has done.

From the start of the pandemic, our Command Centre team gathered, 7 days a week, meeting 2-3 times per day, to respond to a flurry of incoming and ever-changing information. The province's first directive to hospitals was issued March 12, 2020. Thereafter there has been a deluge of information from federal, provincial and local sources, and new knowledge from research bodies, requiring our team to filter through, adopt and disseminate new practices throughout SAH.

Our staff and physicians demonstrated incredible commitment to keeping staff and patients safe with their agility to continuously adjust and adapt to the evolving direction, whether it was around Personal Protective Equipment policies or the surgical and outpatient departments ramping operations up and down, and now up again-- which is no small feat for any hospital. Over 200 staff literally within days, completely modified their business model, seamlessly shifting their workflows offsite, in response to public health guidelines and in support of ensuring the safety of our front-line care workers.

We developed new care protocols; adopted occupational health policies; secured our supply chain; created surge plans; adopted Advanced Goals of Care; expanded the uptake of Digital technology; and led COVID-related research studies.

An effective COVID-19 response required early identification through an efficient testing and lab system. Throughout the evolving pandemic phases, SAH's assessment centre have performed an astounding 12,000 swabs to date. The hospital established a rapid COVID -19 Diagnostic Test, in addition to working closely with regional partners to create an optimized lab system providing timely results.

Early on SAH was designated as one of 23 Pfizer-BioNtech vaccine hospitals in the province, and throughout the vaccination roll-out has played a key role working in association with Algoma Public Health, and the Algoma Ontario Health Team in

deployment of vaccine. To date we have provided over around 4000 vaccines in-house and still ongoing – and in close collaboration through the Community Vaccine Hub administered between 5000-6000 vaccines per week.

We are aware of the heavy COVID 19 burden that other communities have faced and we know that the situation in Algoma could have quickly turned at any time. In Algoma, as we experienced 346 cases per 100,000, other northern communities' case load has been over 6 times that rate. And we are proud to highlight that since the start of the pandemic, SAH has had no COVID 19 outbreaks.

The experience of 2020-21 has one of resiliency, with an unrelenting focus on COVID 19 driven, by shared Commitment – strong Collaboration and quality Care.

The province has worked together as one integrated care system. When the burden of COVID hit critical stages in parts of Ontario, our critical care team was ready and was called upon to support patients in need from other parts of the province– and more recently a neighboring province.

How did our community respond and support each other throughout these difficult months? Our community and local businesses leaned in with unlimited acts of kindness and support. We saw unprecedented increases in donations and fundraising; heartwarming signage posted throughout the community; food donations for our staff; supply donations; and everyone will remember the early mask sewing campaign. The list is extensive and ongoing! It has, and continues to make a difference-- and we thank you.

We know the mission is not over and the work continues – yet we have the confidence that we will continue to be ready. With accelerated vaccination rates and continued improvements of key public health indicators – we are beginning to look ahead. We want to head towards the “new amazing”, not the “new normal.” Although we will not look back, we are ensuring to leverage the lessons

we have learned - to build back better.

We are focused on setting a strong course to lead us confidently into the future. We have we appreciated the strong engagement of all at SAH, our community and partners as we work towards the unveiling our new 2021-24 strategic plan in the Fall of this year.

How do we know we are on the right track? It is encouraging to know that even in the midst of this disruption, our patient –family advisory councils remained strong, and have grown to nearly 100 members. Thanks to you all that are involved with this work and ensuring we have a strong voice of our patients and families.

What would we do without our volunteers? Those who give of their time and talent to help those in their times of need. Due to the COVID 19 restrictions we have been limited in our ability to have volunteers on site. That did not stop our mighty 480 volunteers that found new and innovative ways to contribute over 20,000 hours to SAH in the midst of a pandemic – incredible! We are so pleased that our gradual return to onsite support has begun. Thank you for your commitment – again, we don't succeed without you!

Did you know in 2020-21 we added a total of 321 staff? We continue to attract health care professionals that want to be part of the great work we are doing and serve our community. COVID 19 contributed to a record year for hiring which comprised of 118 nurses, 20 allied health professionals and 183 support team members and leaders. Thank you to our new colleagues. We are excited you have chosen us, and about the contributions you will make.

As health systems evolve, so has our role as a provider of health care services. How do we enact this? SAH continues its affiliation with 15 local health and social services organizations, as a proud member of the Algoma Ontario Health Team. Our AOHT made great strides in its first full year as a Ministry-designated

OHT. Together we delivered on our first Annual Operating Plan. By now everyone is familiar with AOHT partners support to the provision of vaccine through the creation of the Community Vaccine Hub. As well, in collaboration with our East and North Algoma partners, we launched a 36 member Citizens Reference Panel on Integrated Care, providing a diverse voice to all the OHTs work across the District.

SAH continued moving forward to advance collaboration and opportunities with our Indigenous communities, and continue our journey to co-create a comprehensive, culturally sensitive and safe approach to care at SAH. Recently, we partnered to launch an e-learn video on smudging for all staff and held a ceremony within one of our departments; as well we have begun online cultural safety training at our hospital.

Understandably while COVID-19 was “front and centre” there are many areas of health care delivery that required our attention. We are all aware of the critical need for additional Mental Health & Addictions supports for our community. We were pleased that during the year not only were we able to expand a number of our services- including concurrent disorder programming and rapid access addiction medicine – we also achieved a significant milestone. We recently announced government support to move our Residential Withdrawal Management Services to a new site which will provide additional capacity and meet all modern standards of care for some of our most vulnerable clients. After years of planning, we delivered on this key initiative - from the reformulation of a new submission, to provincial announcement, within 1 year. An outcome resulting from the unrelenting efforts across our SAH teams, community colleagues and elected officials.

2020-21 saw us celebrate our one-year anniversary of our Go-live with our Meditech Expanse system and the ONE Partnership Initiative. SAH clinical teams demonstrated leadership and agility in adopting to the impacts of a new health

information system, as the emergence of an unknown virus and related impacts were upon us only months after our launch.

When you have a great team, how do you continue to build for the future? We have forged stronger alliances with our academic research partners - specifically the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Algoma University and Sault College. Our mission continues to be having people educated in our community; trained in our community; and working and thriving in our community. In association with these alliances, we are building a vision that will educate learners and develop new bodies of knowledge in the area of mental health and addictions.

A unique strength of our approach involves Indigenous leaders and communities with the intent to create a holistic approach by integrating Indigenous knowledge with western science.

In closing I would like to take the opportunity to thank our Board of Directors and Board Executive. It is indeed a unique and challenging time to be a director of a health care organization in the midst of a global pandemic –and we have been appreciative of their contributions, guidance and endless hours of hard work during these uncharted times.

The Sault Area Hospital Foundation and Board needs to be recognized for their unwavering support and commitment to raise much needed funds. This past year demonstrated the Foundation’s innovation and ability to pivot, raising significant funds vital in support of our mission.

A sincere thank you to our all our physicians and staff across our organization. While each person’s role is unique, everyone is instrumental in the provision of outstanding care. Your unrelenting commitment to our patients and each other, combined with your compassion and strive for excellence, is inspiring to us all each and every day.

And lastly thank you to the Senior Leadership Team and Medical Advisory Committee- although lockdowns and WebEx meetings have kept us apart, COVID-19 has simultaneously brought us closer together, strengthening our teams during a time of unprecedented change and challenge.

I am very proud of what we have accomplished together. I remain excited about the good work we will continue to do. I look forward to the year ahead and all that we will accomplish!

I wish to thank you for allowing me to share this report.

## Board Chair Report: Sharon Kirkpatrick

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As Chair of the BODs for the SAH, I am pleased to present to you the Board Chair's report for the fiscal year April 1, 2020 to the end of March 2021 and to the end of the board cycle, in terms of regular Board and Board committee meetings.

Dr. Spadafora and Wendy have highlighted the many significant accomplishments of the past fiscal year and I couldn't possibly add to the great job they did except to say on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank Dr. Spadafora and Wendy, for the many accomplishments and for the leadership they provide to our staff, our physicians and our volunteers every day. I would also like to thank every individual, committee and team mentioned in the accomplishments. Many of us on the Board thought responding to COVID 19 was more than enough to manage over the last several months. It's no wonder you are proud of the many accomplishments and we are proud of the accomplishments and all of you as well.

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Spadafora for recognizing the importance of stable physician leadership as we work together to understanding how COVID 19 will change the way care is delivered and for agreeing to give us another year of her leadership as Chief of Staff.

I would also like to acknowledge what Dr. Spadafora and Wendy have both described as the incredible work of our physicians, staff, and volunteers, who all played such an important role in helping us prepare for COVID-19 and care for our patients with COVID-19, regardless of which community they came from. It's because of this incredible work SAH has not had COVID outbreaks since the start of the pandemic, when many hospitals in Northern Ontario and throughout this province and our country had outbreaks. I would also like to acknowledge the great work of our community partners and our community for everything that was done to keep our community safe. Algoma experienced 346 cases per 100,000, when other northern communities' case load has been 6 times that

rate. All this is truly remarkable and it is so important we all continue this great work so we keep our hospital and our community safe!

The board can't do what we do without the support of a number of individuals as well. We are fortunate to have

- Wendy as President and CEO,
- Dr. Spadafora as COS and Chair of the Medical Advisory Committee,
- Sue Roger as Chief Nursing Executive,
- Drs. Steven Smith and Matt Solomon, for part of the term as the President and Vice President of the Medical Staff Association,
- Dr. Christa Cassalman and Dr. Jim Boseovski, as the current President and Vice President of the Medical Staff Association

who, by virtue of their positions, sit on the board as ex officio directors. We need to hear their perspectives on the many items we deal with at the Board so they can fulfil their roles as ex officio directors on our board and their perspectives can help of us fulfil our role.

Brandy is also a support to the Board and helps us get our messages out to our staff, physicians, volunteers and the public.

As a board, we do a lot of our work through our committees and there are a number of individuals who support our Quality & Services, Resources, Audit, Education and Governance Committees. We have our senior leadership team of Ila, Lil, Andy, Sue and Wendy who partner with our board committee Chairs Trevor, Lisa, Jim, Mario and me and our and Committee Vice Chairs Joe, Brent, and Johanne. We also have administrative assistants Jennifer, Alison and Patti who support our committees and they do their work quietly but we all know how important their work is for the success of our committees. We also have a number

of Administrative and Medical Directors who present the great work their teams are accountable for at our committee meetings. Our committees and our board could not fulfil our mandate without the support of every one of these individuals.

This year, the 2020/21 Board term was an unusual term in that a new term will often bring a few new Board and/or community members; not 6 new Board members and 2 new community members on a Board that also had 4 members with 2 years' experience or less. We had been successful in recruiting 8 new members with the skills and competencies we required and we believed every new member was going to be an extremely valuable member of our Board; however, with 77% of our members having 2 years' experience or less on our Board, one of our Board priorities was to develop new board and community members and current board members as quickly as possible. We developed Board priorities to improve the overall Board functioning with Board development, our Board committee structure and policy and by-law reviews and revisions.

We continuously challenged our new members to:

- complete orientation and all the required learning modules;
- be well prepared for and attend orientation and education sessions;
- actively participate in work outside of the Board and Committee meetings;
- be fully engaged by thoroughly preparing and attending every committee meeting of the committees they were assigned to and every Board meeting; and,
- understand and fulfill their: duties and obligations as an individual directors and their role and functions as a Board.

While we were not surprised that every new member rose to the challenge, we

were surprised that they exceeded all expectations we had for them believing our expectations were a stretch, and knowing most of the new members have extremely responsible, demanding careers. Needless to say, we know how fortunate we are that our new members are extremely dedication to the commitment they made to our Board and more importantly to the patients we serve.

I would also like to acknowledge the dedication and efforts of the entire Board of Directors who volunteer their time and expertise. Every time I put a call out for help with an additional project or initiative, an additional subcommittee or an additional meeting, members stepped up every time and gave even more of their time and expertise, despite the many hours spent preparing for and attending Board and Committee meetings and retreats and preparing the work of the Board and Committees in subcommittees.

I also want to acknowledge our members for their contribution to the following Board priorities:

#### Providing Strategic Direction with the work around

- The 2021/22 Strategic Plan
- The ONE electronic hospital record
- The Algoma Ontario Health Team and
- Residential Withdrawal Management Services

#### Overseeing Quality Performance and Financial Performance of the SAH with the

- The Quality Improvement Plan 2020/21 Performance
- The development of the 2021/22 Quality Improvement Plan, and
- The work on Enterprise Risk Management

#### Overseeing the CEO and COS with

- Leadership Succession Plans, Evaluations and Performance Scorecard

This year, Jim McLean will be leaving our Board as his busy career will take up a lot more of his time but I want to thank Jim for his years of service and the leadership he provided as our 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair and Chair to our Quality and Services Committee for 2 years. Jim was a member on the majority of our Board committees and the experience he gained in three short years and the leadership he provided will be missed.

This year, Mario Turco will be continuing as a Board member but will be stepping down from the Board Leadership position as the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair and Chair of the Education Committee. Mario was a true partner to me as the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair and in his role he attended 100% of all the Board and committee meetings, the Board retreats, the working committees he was a member of, and all planning meetings and meeting debriefings scheduled throughout the year. He also led the development of a number of initiatives or projects. I think it's fair to say the commitments Mario made and kept throughout the year was second only to Mario's "passion for the work he took on".

We have a lot of work to do in the upcoming term as we return to some of the work we had planned prior to COVID 19 and we continue aligning our Board work with best practice and determine the roles and functions of a Board that will be address in the upcoming term. As a Board, we will be most interested in understanding how COVID 19 will change the way care is delivered.

I anticipate an exciting term ahead of us if May is any indication of what the new term will bring us. As I'm sure everyone here is aware SAH received some exciting long-awaited news at the end of May.

On May 27<sup>th</sup>, SAH participated in a virtual funding announcement; during this event, the Honourable Minister of Health, Christine Elliot, Minister Ross Romano and Associate Minister Michael Tibollo announced operational funding for the expansion of our mental health and addiction services.

These funds will support the creation of a community-based addictions services center that will offer 20-withdrawal management beds, supported by 4-hospital-based acute medical beds. While we wholeheartedly thank; Ministers Elliot, Romano, and Tibollo, for their unwavering support during this process. I'd be remised if I didn't also take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge the tireless efforts and steadfast commitment of both our incredible team at SAH and our valuable community partners who have worked so hard to make this center a reality!

This new Community-Based Addictions Services Centre will provide our community with a safe space where individuals will find compassionate care tailored to their needs. Moreover, it also marks a significant step forward in our mission to address the ongoing and increasing concerns for those in our community with substance use disorders and their families.

Once again I would like to express my sincerest appreciation to our incredible team for their unwavering dedication to our patients, their families, and our community. I know I speak for everyone around this table when I say; SAH remains unwaveringly committed to doing everything possible to continue enhancing and expanding access to these urgently needed critical services for our community.

In closing, I want to reiterate what has been said by our CEO and COS in many different ways. We should all be very proud of what we have accomplished by working together and we have a lot of good work we will continue to accomplish.

Thank you.